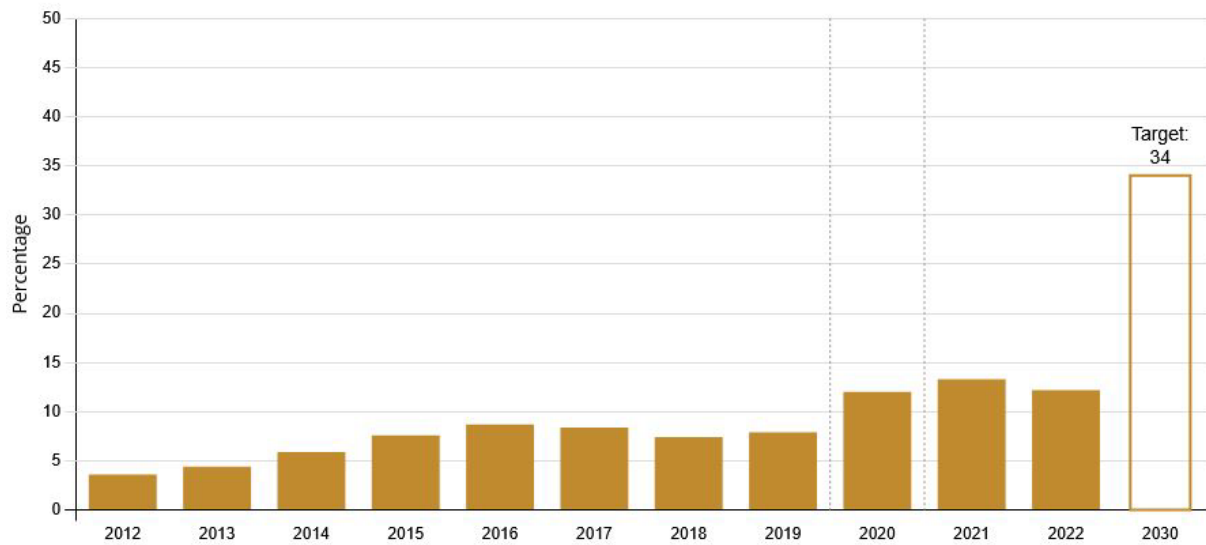




Sustainable consumption – *Making consumption environmentally and socially compatible*

12.1.a Market share of products certified by a state sustainability standard

Market share of products certified by a state sustainability standard



Note(s):

From 2020, also with the clothing category. The results from 2020 onwards are therefore only comparable with previous years to a limited extent. – From 2021, revised EU energy labelling for various product groups. The results from 2021 are therefore only comparable with previous years to a limited extent.

Data source(s):

German Environment Agency

Definition

The indicator represents the market share of products with voluntary or mandatory sustainability labels (in %) whose award criteria are determined by government bodies. The sustainability labels and products include energy consumption labelling for cars, large household appliances, light bulbs and televisions; organic labels for food; the Green Button for clothing and the Blue Angel for hygiene paper, detergents and cleaning agents.

Intention

Private households can consume sustainably both directly and indirectly. On the one hand, their purchasing decisions influence their own environmental footprint, as energy-efficient vehicles or insulated houses require less energy to use and cause lower greenhouse gas emissions. On the other hand, consumers can purchase products that have been manufactured in a particularly sustainable way.

Target

Increase to 34% by 2030



Content and progress

The indicator represents the market share of products that either achieve the highest tier within their respective product class according to the EU Energy Labelling Scheme (EU-ELS) or are certified with one of the following environmental labels: EU Ecolabel, EU Organic Logo, Blue Angel, or Green Button. While the EU-ELS primarily assesses energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, the other environmental labels also cover additional environmental aspects – for example, the use of pesticides or pollution from wastewater containing harmful substances. The aim of the indicator is to demonstrate the extent to which environmentally friendly product variants are replacing conventional products in the market.

Only a selection of specific product groups is taken into account – among other reasons, because sales data for sustainably certified products are only available to a limited extent. At the same time, this approach is intended to avoid double counting. The data are provided by the German Environment Agency (UBA), which draws upon various sources for the calculation, including surveys conducted by the Gesellschaft für Konsumforschung (GfK). Data comparability over time is limited: first, the product group clothing has only been included in the indicator since 2020; second, changes in the criteria for awarding the EU Energy Label affect comparability. The efficiency classes, which until 2021 ranged from A+++ to D, were rescaled to a range from A to G for various product groups.

The indicator covers the consumption domains housing, mobility, clothing, and food. Included are, among others, household appliances such as refrigerators, washing machines, televisions, and air conditioners, as well as lighting products, foodstuffs, sanitary paper, laundry and cleaning agents, and passenger cars. Since the market sizes of the individual product groups vary considerably, the market shares of products with official environmental labels are weighted according to their respective sales volumes. Due to this weighting, the food sector has the greatest influence on the indicator: around 60% of the indicator value is attributable to the share of organic food. Approximately 24% is determined by the share of sustainable passenger cars, and 12% by the clothing product group.

Weighting by the environmental relevance of each product group is not feasible, as the environmental labels address different categories – such as energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, or material use – which cannot be aggregated into a single metric. A comprehensive ecological assessment in the form of a unified environmental footprint is therefore not possible. The indicator records newly placed-on-the-market products in relation to the total market. Behavioural changes through more efficient products – for example, increased consumption (rebound effect) – are not considered. Moreover, the indicator is based on sales values, meaning it does not allow conclusions to be drawn regarding the physical volume of sales, given price differences between conventional and certified products. Changes in the indicator value may therefore also result from price developments within individual product groups.

In 2022, expenditure on products with official sustainability labels amounted to 49.9 billion euros – corresponding to 12.2% of total sales in the product groups considered. In 2012, this share was 3.6%. After the indicator value increased by 4.1 percentage points in 2020 compared with the previous year, it fell in 2022 by 1.1 percentage points relative to 2021, and was thus only slightly above the 2020 value. If the trend of recent years contin-



ues, the politically established target of increasing the market share to at least 34% by 2030 is unlikely to be met.

The increase in 2020 was primarily attributable to the sharp rise in the market share of A+ passenger cars, which – as a result of government incentive schemes – rose from 10.0% to 27.5%. In 2022, this market share stood at 31.2%. The market share of organic food was 6.3% in 2022, below the previous peak of 7.0% in 2021. In the clothing product group, the market share of sustainable products reached only 0.2% in 2022.

In several other product groups, the market shares of certified products are significantly higher, for example washing machines (96%), lighting products (76%), cooker hoods (60%), and tumble dryers (58%). However, due to their relatively low sales volumes in comparison with the total market, these high shares have only a minor impact on the overall indicator. The inclusion of the clothing product group with the Green Button label in 2020 affects the comparability of the data before and after 2020 relatively strongly, owing to its high weighting factor. Without taking the clothing product group into account, the indicator value in 2022 would be approximately 14%.

Type of target

Target with specific target value

Assessment

The market share of products certified by a state sustainability standard should be increased to at least 34% by 2030.

According to the target formulation, if the average trend observed between 2017 and 2022 continues, the politically defined target will be substantially missed. Indicator 12.1.a is therefore assessed as cloud for 2022.

